In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method of screening for ~~detecting~~ early cancer, comprising ~~the~~ steps of:
   (a) measuring the level of ~~a~~ human midkine ~~protein or a human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N-terminus or both,~~ in a body fluid ~~using a one step sandwich enzyme immunoassay~~ and,
   (b) comparing the measured level obtained in step a) to a control human midkine protein level of a healthy subject, wherein an elevated measured level as compared to the control level indicates the presence of early cancer, wherein early cancer comprises cancer at stage 0 or stage I of the TNM classification.

2. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is gastric cancer.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the gastric cancer is at stage I.

4. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is hepatocellular carcinoma.

5. (original) The method according to claim 4, wherein the hepatocellular carcinoma is at stage I.

6. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is lung cancer.

7. (original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the lung cancer is at stage I.

8. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the body fluid is ~~serum~~ or urine.

9. (currently amended) A method of screening for ~~detecting~~ early cancer comprising ~~the~~ steps of:

(a) contacting a body fluid with a pair of antibodies that specifically bind to a ~~human~~ midkine in a body fluid ~~protein, a human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N terminus, or both, wherein one of said antibodies comprises an avian anti-human midkine antibody~~, and

(b) comparing the level of binding between the antibodies and ~~the~~ human ~~midkine protein, a fragment thereof, or both~~ of step (a) to a control binding level of a healthy subject, wherein an elevated binding level as compared to the control level indicates the presence of early cancer, wherein early cancer comprises cancer at stage 0 or stage I of the TNM classification.

10. (withdrawn) A diagnostic agent for early cancer comprising an antibody that recognizes midkine, a fragment thereof, or both.

11. (withdrawn). A kit for detecting early cancer in a biological sample, wherein (a) the kit comprises a container that holds an antibody that specifically binds to at least one epitope of midkine, a fragment thereof, or both and (b) the antibody determines the presence of midkine, a fragment thereof, or both in the biological sample.

12. (withdrawn). The kit according to claim 11, wherein the antibody is adsorbed onto a solid.

13. (currently amended) A method for assessing cancer prognosis, comprising the steps ~~of~~:

(a) measuring the level of a human midkine ~~protein, a human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N terminus, or both~~ in a body fluid both before and after tumor treatment ~~using a one-step sandwich enzyme immunoassay (EIA)~~, comparing the level measured after treatment to a level measured before treatment, and

(b) correlating a difference in the measured levels to cancer prognosis, wherein a reduction in measured level after treatment is indicative of successful ~~therapy~~ treatment and positive prognosis.

14. (original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the cancer is gastric cancer, hepatocellular carcinoma, or lung cancer.

15. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein human midkine levels are measured using a ~~the one-step~~ sandwich enzyme immunoassay that includes an avian anti-human midkine antibody ~~and a rabbit anti-human midkine antibody~~.

16. (currently amended) The method according to claim 13, wherein human midkine levels are measured using a ~~the one-step~~ sandwich enzyme immunoassay that includes an avian anti-human midkine antibody ~~and a rabbit anti-human midkine antibody~~.